1306, the network interface 1308, and/or the memory 1312 may be communicatively coupled to each other by a communication bus 1310.

The video display adapter 1302 provides display signals to a display (not shown in FIG. 13) permitting an agent of the server system 1320 to monitor and configure operation of the server system 1320 and/or to provide information (e.g., regarding transportation and/or storage of an item by the AFC, shuttle and/or UAV). The input/output interface 1306 likewise communicates with external input/output devices not shown in FIG. 13, such as a mouse, keyboard, scanner, or other input and output devices that can be operated by an agent of the server system 1320. The network interface 1308 includes hardware, software, or any combination thereof, to communicate with other computing devices. For example, the network interface 1308 may be configured to provide communications between the server system 1320 and other computing devices, such as that of an AFC, materials handling facility, delivery location, UAV and/or shuttle, via a network.

The memory 1312 generally comprises random access memory (RAM), read-only memory (ROM), flash memory, and/or other volatile or permanent memory. The memory 1312 is shown storing an operating system 1314 for controlling the operation of the server system 1320. A binary input/output system (BIOS) 1316 for controlling the low-level operation of the server system 1320 is also stored in the memory 1312.

The memory 1312 additionally stores program code and data for providing network services to the AFC, shuttle, UAV, materials handling facility, and/or the inventory management system. The program instructions enable communication with a data store manager application 1321 to facilitate data exchange between the data store 1309 and the inventory management system.

As used herein, the term "data store" refers to any device or combination of devices capable of storing, accessing, and retrieving data, which may include any combination and number of data servers, databases, data storage devices and data storage media, in any standard, distributed or clustered environment. The server system 1320 can include any appropriate hardware and software for integrating with the data store 1309 as needed to execute aspects of one or more applications for an AFC, shuttle, materials handling facility, delivery location, UAV, and/or the inventory management system.

The data store 1309 can include several separate data tables, databases or other data storage mechanisms and media for storing data relating to a particular aspect. For example, the illustrated data store 1309 includes mechanisms for maintaining information related to operations, inventory, maps, GPS data, etc., which can be used to generate and deliver information to an AFC, shuttle, UAV, and/or inventory management system 1326. It should be understood that there might be additional aspects that can be stored in the data store 1309 and that additional data stores beyond the one illustrated may be included. The data store 1309 is operable, through logic associated therewith, to receive instructions from the server system 1320 and obtain, update or otherwise process data in response thereto.

The memory 1312 may also include the inventory management system 1326, discussed above. The inventory management system 1326 may be executable by the processor 1300 to implement one or more of the functions of the server system 1320. In one implementation, the inventory management system 1326 may represent instructions embodied in one or more software programs stored in the memory 1312. In

another implementation, the inventory management system 1326 can represent hardware, software instructions, or a combination thereof.

The server system 1320, in one implementation, is a distributed environment utilizing several computer systems and components that are interconnected via communication links, using one or more computer networks or direct connections. However, it will be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art that such a system could operate equally well in a system having fewer or a greater number of components than are illustrated in FIG. 13. Thus, the depiction in FIG. 13 should be taken as being illustrative in nature and not limiting to the scope of the disclosure.

Those skilled in the art will appreciate that in some implementations the functionality provided by the processes and systems discussed above may be provided in alternative ways, such as being split among more software modules or routines or consolidated into fewer modules or routines. Similarly, in some implementations, illustrated processes and systems may provide more or less functionality than is described, such as when other illustrated processes instead lack or include such functionality respectively, or when the amount of functionality that is provided is altered. In addition, while various operations may be illustrated as being performed in a particular manner (e.g., in serial or in parallel) and/or in a particular order, those skilled in the art will appreciate that, in other implementations, the operations may be performed in other orders and in other manners. Those skilled in the art will also appreciate that the data structures discussed above may be structured in different manners, such as by having a single data structure split into multiple data structures or by having multiple data structures consolidated into a single data structure. Similarly, in some implementations, illustrated data structures may store more or less information than is described, such as when other illustrated data structures instead lack or include such information respectively, or when the amount or types of information that is stored is altered. The various methods and systems as illustrated in the figures and described herein represent example implementations. The methods and systems may be implemented in software, hardware, or a combination thereof in other implementations. Similarly, the order of any method may be changed and various elements may be added, reordered, combined, omitted, modified, etc., in other implementations.

From the foregoing, it will be appreciated that, although specific implementations have been described herein for purposes of illustration, various modifications may be made without deviating from the spirit and scope of the appended claims and the elements recited therein. In addition, while certain aspects are presented below in certain claim forms, the inventors contemplate the various aspects in any available claim form. For example, while only some aspects may currently be recited as being embodied in a computer readable storage medium, other aspects may likewise be so embodied. Various modifications and changes may be made as would be obvious to a person skilled in the art having the benefit of this disclosure. It is intended to embrace all such modifications and changes and, accordingly, the above description is to be regarded in an illustrative rather than a restrictive sense.

What is claimed is:

1. A computer implemented method, comprising:

under control of one or more computing systems configured with executable instructions;

receiving an order for an item from a user located in a metropolitan area, wherein the item is maintained in an inventory of an aerial fulfillment center ("AFC") that is airborne at an altitude;